

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

[1800

tribunate was the one asylum of liberty under the constitution of the year VIII. It was supposed, as has just been said, that the impotence of the tribunes would be offset by the independence of the council of state.

In this last body, therefore, were assembled three important classes: sincere Bonapartists like Roederer, Regnault de St.-Jean-d'Angely, and Boulay de la Meurthe; clever specialists like Ganteaume, Chaptal, and Fourcroy, who were quite willing to serve the First Consul; and a number of proselytes from among the royalists and other factions. For the most part these were men of great ability, and for a time they found in the First Consul a disinterestedness in serving France which made them his devoted servants. The personality of the council was Bonaparte's, and whatever independence it possessed was his. The court of appeals was duly organized by the senate, which had this right as being the guardian of the constitution. The justices and councilors of a supreme court, the keystone of the judiciary, were nominated by the same body. The other courts were also ably manned with officials who, though not servile, were staunch supporters of the new government. Before the time when the campaign could open in the spring of 1800, all these parts were intended to be, and actually were, running smoothly; but they were running by the inspiration and activity of a single man. The council of state was his greater self, the senate his instrument of governing; the legislative body was as silent as the tribunate was noisy — neither was a serious check on his plans. Legislation of the greatest importance was under way; it was all devised for purposes of centralization, and was studied in detail by the First Consul. Administration was proceeding with scarcely any friction whatsoever; but this was because Bona-